

— Celebrating — A HAPPY & SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON



Spread Cheer — Not COVID-19 — This Holiday Season

This year's holiday season will be different. Due to the pandemic, many of us won't be with family and friends as usual. But we can still celebrate! Keep in mind that the outlook for a more normal holiday season in 2021 is promising with a COVID-19 vaccine for the public on the horizon, and it is very likely that we'll be able to celebrate the winter holidays in-person next year.

Until then, we all need to continue doing our part to slow the spread of COVID-19. The safest way to celebrate this season is with people in your immediate household...while planning virtual celebrations with others!

Here are some tips from the Cambridge Public Health Department on how to enjoy the holiday season safely, slow the spread of COVID-19, and protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

HOLIDAY SAFETY BASICS:

- Wear a mask at all times.
- Practice physical distancing.
- Wash your hands frequently.



LOWER-RISK ACTIVITIES:

- Hosting a virtual holiday party.
- Doing a "no-contact delivery" of homemade treats for local loved ones and/or neighbors.
- Decorating your home with festive decor.
- Walking around your neighborhood to look at houses with holiday decor.
- Participating in religious ceremonies virtually.
- Watching holiday-themed events or movies at home.
- Sending holiday cards.
- Sending gifts and opening them together virtually.
- Shopping online for gifts.



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MODERATE-RISK ACTIVITIES:

- Meeting outside with family and friends who live in your community. Massachusetts outdoor gatherings are currently limited to 25 people.
- Attending a local outdoor community gathering, like a menorah lighting or a Christmas tree lighting. Remember to wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet from anyone not in your household. Avoid crowds.



HIGHER-RISK ACTIVITIES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM SAFER:

Going holiday shopping when stores are busy.

Make it safer:

- Consider visiting stores at less popular times, such as weekday afternoons, or shopping online.

Attending an indoor religious service in person.

Make it safer:

- Virtual services are the safest option as attending services in person has resulted in increased cases of COVID-19.
- If possible, see if there's an outdoor or virtual service you can attend.
- If indoors, be sure to stay six feet from anyone not in your immediate household and wear a mask. Avoid singing because it puts everyone at higher risk for spreading (and catching) the virus.
- See if your house of worship has services with recorded music or has a soloist who wears a mask while singing. This would make a service safer compared to having live choirs.
- Leave the house of worship once the service is over.

Going to the gym on busy days like New Year's Day.

Make it safer:

- Try to exercise at home or outdoors.

Celebrating at a restaurant indoors, especially with people outside your household.

Make it safer:

- Only dine out with household members.

- Encourage everyone to wear masks except when eating and drinking.
- Choose places with good indoor air ventilation.
- If you choose to eat out with people not in your household, keep the group small and consider dining outdoors. Refrain from talking loudly and singing.

INDOOR GATHERINGS

If you decide to have an indoor gathering, it's important to remember that many people are asymptomatic with COVID-19 — that is, they may not realize that they have COVID-19 because they don't have any symptoms. But, they can still spread the disease. Getting together indoors puts everyone at greater risk for coronavirus infection. Massachusetts indoor gatherings are currently limited to 10 individuals. Here are some tips to make your get-together safer:

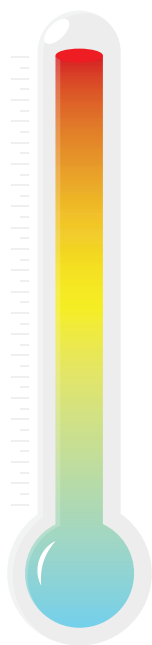
1. Keep visits short.
2. Practice basic safety measures. Wear masks when not eating (and have extras on hand). Encourage frequent hand washing. Be mindful of physical distancing and remind others to stay 6 feet apart.
3. Improve ventilation by opening windows and doors.
4. If you are hosting a meal:
 - Encourage guests to bring their own food and drinks for their household. Do not share utensils, and avoid buffets and other self-service food or drink options.
 - Seat people with plenty of space from one another, possibly in multiple rooms rather than a large shared table.
 - Before the event, limit contact with others and leave your home only for essentials for 14 days before your holiday gathering OR obtain a molecular (PCR) COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the celebration.
 - After an event, wait four to five days to get tested so the test has a better chance of detecting any coronavirus infection. While you wait, limit contact with others and leave your home only for essentials.



TRAVELING DURING COVID-19

Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

**IF YOU PLAN ON TRAVELING,
PLEASE NOTE THE RELATIVE RISK:**



Highest Risk

- Flights with layovers

Higher Risk

- Trips with people who are not in your household
- Trains and buses
- Direct flights

Moderate Risk

- Longer trips by car that require stops along the way

Lowest Risk

- Staying home and celebrating with members of your immediate household
- Short trips by car with household members and no stops along the way

For more information on holiday travel, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) page on [holiday travel](#).

If your travel plans include going out-of-state, be sure to review your destination state's travel orders and be aware of Massachusetts' requirements for travelers returning home.



HOLIDAY RECIPE

Here is a recipe selected from the Cambridge Public Health Department's Public Health Nutritionist and Cambridge in Motion team. Bon Appétit!

SAUTÉED SPICED APPLES (À LA MODE!) FROM A COUPLE COOKS

Ingredients:

- 3 firm large tart-sweet apples (like Honeycrisp, Gala, Fuji, etc.)
- 1 1/2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 1/2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 3 tbsp butter
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving

Instructions:

1. Cut the apples into 1/4" slices (no need to peel unless you want to).
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the apples with the brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.
3. In a large skillet heat the butter over medium heat until the butter is just starting to brown (about 2 minutes). Add the apples and sauté 4-5 minutes, until tender.
4. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

LET'S BE COURTEOUS AND PATIENT DURING THIS SEASON.

With people feeling tired and stressed from the pandemic, a little kindness can go a long way.

- If you are feeling down, share your feelings with a trusted friend or family member.
- If distress impacts your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a counselor, doctor, or member of your faith community.
- Remember that although this year may be different, the pandemic will end. There is a light at the end of the tunnel.